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ABSTRACT

The Anglo-American Conference on Education for the Less Privileged was held recently in Oxfordshire, England. Fourteen representatives from the United States met with 11 British conferees. The purpose of the conference was to examine the present character and availability of education (preprimary to 18 years), including vocational and technical education, for the less-privileged elements of the populations of the United States and Britain respectively, excluding the physically handicapped, but including immigrants, racial minorities, others with a language problem, and those handicapped by backgrounds of poverty, ignorance, or indifference; to consider its adequacy or shortcomings in overcoming such difficulties and handicaps and providing a fair opportunity for all in life in a modern society; and, to indicate the lines on which provision of education for the less privileged should be improved in scale, organization, and content. The conference members agreed on the need for consistent and long-range planning in education for the less privileged. They accented the importance of teaching basic knowledge, while advocating the development of a close relationship among school, parents, and community. They stressed the importance of special, practical, and continuous training for teachers of the disadvantaged. (Author/JM)

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He usually sits in the back of the room. He's quiet. His mind wanders.

Sometimes he can't understand the teacher; she doesn't talk the way he does. She doesn't even talk like his friends, the cartoon characters on TV.

When questioned in class, he answers in short sentences, grunts, or gestures. One of the things he's learned best is how to "turn da teach off."

He doesn't remember ever seeing a book at home, just some old copies of movie magazines. Now he's surrounded by books, and it's overwhelming.

He's not mentally retarded — just "less privileged." He's been cheated. And there are millions like him in America's classrooms today.

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"The true greatness of a people does not consist in borrowing nothing from others, but in borrowing from all what is good and in perfecting whatever is appropriate."

Victor Cousin

EDUCATION FOR THE LESS PRIVILEGED

A Report of the Anglo-American Conference on Education for the Less Privileged, co-sponsored by the Ditchley Foundation and IDEA.

"Despite our enormous and costly educational establishment, this country has more functional illiterates than most other industrially advanced nations. We have more people who do not possess minimum knowledge of the elements of language, mathematics, history, and geography that are considered part of *elementary education in advanced European countries and which every normal person there appears to absorb at school.*"

Vice Admiral H. G. Rickover, USN, testifying before Eighty-seventh Congress

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INTRODUCTION

Jonathan Swift, in the eighteenth century, offered "A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country." His plan for solving the nation's social problems: the rich should devour the children of the poor!

Disadvantaged children, the British satirist wrote, "may at a year old be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune, through the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter."

Mister Swift's "Modest Proposal" notwithstanding, several serious questions concerning the education of the less privileged have been raised by educators both in the United States and abroad:

- Should the emphasis in programs and techniques for the less privileged be on bringing the child into the school, or on bringing the school into the home?
- Why do children from poverty backgrounds who are in expensive and generally effective schools still fail to achieve as much as affluent children in barely average schools?
- Does improved education give a greater push toward equality of opportunity than other forms of antipoverty assistance?
- Why has better education, to date, not been especially effective in raising the incomes of the poor?
- Should teachers of the less privileged be given special "combat pay"?
- Does the disadvantaged child tend to live "down" to his expectations?

These were just a few of the problems that confronted delegates to the ANGLO-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION FOR THE LESS PRIVILEGED, held recently in Oxfordshire, England. Fourteen representatives from the United States met with eleven British conferees under the chairmanship of Sir Alec Clegg, chief education officer, West Riding of Yorkshire.

The purpose of the conference was:

> To examine the present character and availability of education (preprimary to eighteen years), including vocational and technical education, for the less-privileged elements of the populations of the United States and Britain respectively, excluding the physically handicapped such as blind, deaf, or spastics and the severely mentally handicapped, but including immigrants, racial minorities, others with a language problem, and those handicapped by backgrounds of poverty, ignorance, or indifference; to consider its adequacy or shortcoming in overcoming such difficulties and handicaps and providing a fair opportunity for all in life in a modern society; and to indicate the lines on which provision of education for the less privileged should be improved in scale, organization, and content.

The three-day conference was held at Ditchley Park, a large eighteenth-century country house near Oxford.

WHO ARE THE UNDERPRIVILEGED?

The conference planners excluded the physically handicapped, but included those with linguistic and other learning disabilities; apart from this, they did not attempt an advance definition of "the underprivileged."

This was just as well, for as soon as the conference convened it was clear that for its members the underprivileged are, in effect, those who show themselves to be so by *educational criteria:* the children who fail to keep up with the rest or to take advantage of the school.

An early debate on the relative weight to be given to heredity and environment as reasons for this failure led to the conclusion that factors of heredity could neither be isolated nor convincingly assessed. The primary cause of such educational deficiency could, therefore, be assumed to be *poor environment;* the converse followed, that the less privileged could be virtually identified with the inferior band in the spectrum of school success.

This reasoning led the conference on a path largely unexpected by some of those who were greatly concerned about the problem but not

closely involved in it. Instead of considering special programs or special techniques for less-privileged types of children, the members regarded such treatment as likely to be counter-productive — by making the children more conscious than ever of their shortcomings, and less willing and able to become integrated with the majority.

The programs and techniques for the less privileged must be, it seemed, programs and techniques *for all* — and they must be concerned directly with the environment from which the educational symptoms of deficiency stemmed.

One American thought that, perhaps in order to save embarrassment, the heredity question is being "politely skirted." If this were intended to refer to the comparative ability of different ethnic groups, it might be tempting to place a racialistic interpretation on the poor performance of children in Negro ghettos. But a recent IQ testing in Los Angeles challenged racialistic assumptions.

Out of 400 elementary schools, the one with a 90 percent black enrollment scored the highest average IQ. The school was in a neighborhood with a largely professional Negro population, which tended to underline the influence of environment.

From the evidence of a number of studies, radical changes in environment have led to marked advances in performance between generations. In this sense, the limits to the educational development of children clearly have not been reached.

It has been claimed that by three years of age, children have developed 50 percent of their potential IQ, but this is regarded as pertinent only to children from "normal" homes. The effect of a thorough change in environment on IQ attainment at a later stage is shown by the improved performance in tests of children adopted into higher IQ families. The middle-class child is, in any case, favored by language-oriented mental tests as they tend to measure breadth of vocabulary.

The question, then, is how to break the cycle of poor environment and poor performance. It is generally agreed that parents must be brought to share in the educational process if the children's backgrounds are to be improved. However, efforts to involve parents should avoid taking the form of supplementing or supplanting the influence of the home, but rather should aim at reinforcing it.

Education for parenthood is also required, both through community programs and through instruction given to young people before they leave school.

It followed from these arguments that schools should not be separate from the community in furthering education. The acceptance of this principle is a starting point for improving environment, but, in the long run, the problem can be solved only by providing wider opportunities for educational advance in the schools.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

It is generally agreed that parental involvement is a major problem when dealing with the less privileged. The success of one project in Berkeley, California, was noted with particular interest. There, parents of Negro-ghetto children were *hired as classroom aides.* The results of the program, developed under the United States Office of Education through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, were summarized as follows:

"We believed that both the teachers and the aides needed training. We saw that the teachers were different from the community. The teachers weren't really oriented to what the community wanted, what it was concerned with.

"The teachers were middle class, regardless of their color. Their sense of discipline and what was expected of a child were different, and the kids had to go between these two different worlds several times a day. The kids had to adjust, and this was asking too much.

"At the same time, the aides — who had to be parents of school-age children to hold their jobs — often shared the community's unawareness of what was really going on in the classroom.

"They had to come into the class to find out. Some say that low-income parents don't come in because they aren't interested. That isn't true. It's because they perceive of the teacher as a doctor, a professional, and they rely on teachers to do the whole job. When the aides got into the classroom, they saw that the parent was really needed, that the school was not the sole educational agent in society, *and they have helped carry this message back to their own neighborhoods.*

"Under the Berkeley program, aides are compensated for additional experience and training. And this offers one of the most exciting possibilities in the project's future. We believe that if aides take college training and are thus able to improve their incomes, they will help show the low-income community the relevance of education.

"One reason the poor don't take education seriously is that it isn't relevant to the adult. That is, education doesn't make a difference in what he is doing for a living. So if our aides go back to school to get training, it helps. *If it is relevant to parents and they sit around the table and talk about it, it will mean something to the kids.*"

Another method of involving parents in the school system is the principle used by the Head Start program, launched in 1965 in the United States. This project laid specific responsibilities on parents whose agreement had to be obtained, first on the appointment of a progam director, and secondly on filing applications for funds.

It was interesting to note the stages by which relations between professional educators and parents developed in these communities. In the first phase, the educators usually presented a wealth of plans which parents could not understand.

Next, the parents reacted and objected to being overborne. In the third phase, parents showed a desire not merely to advise, but to take over control from the educators. This caused the committee members to ask what decisions they should take and to seek professional advice, but of their own choosing.

In the final phase, a balance was reached between the professionals who had learned about the interests of the poor and the poor who had learned that not all professionals were remote and uninterested. The process toward achieving this balance was inevitably accompanied with much anger and frustration.

Some disharmony was to be expected, it was noted. Teachers, for example, might justifiably consider that curricular matters should be reserved for them, in view of their technical competence. Students might have ambitions which, however estimable, are regarded by teachers as unrealistic and, if pursued, of disservice to the student himself.

On a wider note, there also could be conflict between the aspirations of a local community in its search for cultural identity and those of the larger society of which it formed a part.

In the midst of such conflicting pressures, teachers need to steer a satisfactory course that would spare them the intrusion of others into the areas of their professional competence. This usually could be achieved if the school administrator would provide leadership in sharing responsibility and welcomed consultation, while encouraging his staff to follow his example.

Program administrators or the school staff must explore new means of reaching parents. At worst, a program should operate in spite of parents' lack of cooperation or failure to understand and value what is being offered.

Parental disinterest, it seemed, is not necessarily a barrier to a successful educational effort. A British member, for instance, described the achievement of a good secondary comprehensive school in a deprived area with a 40 percent immigrant enrollment and 15 to 18 nationalities represented. The school visitor had found many homes deplorable and parents uncooperative to a point where, in one case, months of persuasion had been required to induce them to supply the eyeglasses needed by their child.

Nevertheless, the school has succeeded in providing a rich educational experience and in opening up a better future for its students. Tolerance and understanding are shown by senior boys toward their juniors, and the academic results are noteworthy — with a number of university places gained or provisionally offered.

MEETING MIDDLE-CLASS OBJECTIONS

Parental objections from the middle-class community, rather than from the underprivileged, come under close scrutiny in an experimental educational program called "Project Concern" in Hartford, Connecticut. This project involves the bussing of inner-city children from grades K - 5 to classes in suburban elementary schools in order to assess the academic growth that takes place when the typical disadvantaged child of the city is placed in suburban schools where learning expectations are higher.

Each suburb held a town meeting after the proposal was submitted. The meetings were usually conducted with at least surface decorum, but in each instance the crowds were described as "standing room only," and the intensity of the feelings ran very high. There were occasional episodes of both vehemence and viciousness. Generally, the tone of these meetings was more negative than positive.

The basic objections of these middle-class suburban parents are worth noting in light of the conference position, often repeated, that education of good quality must be available to all, and it should be possible for the deprived to reach a stage where they can fully participate with others. The suburban objections to Hartford's "Project Concern" are:

1. This is Hartford's problem and the city should solve it.
2. This is the beginning of metropolitan government and it will result in the loss of local autonomy and jurisdiction.
3. It would be better to spend the money on improving the conditions in the Hartford public schools.
4. The time involved in bussing will be physically harmful to the children.
5. The contrast between the affluence of the suburb and the poverty of the home will result in psychological trauma.
6. Children will become isolated from their own neighborhoods and lose a sense of belonging.
7. Their educational disabilities will be brought into clearer focus both to themselves and to the suburban children, resulting in a confirmation of their own negative self-perception and the negative perception of suburban children.
8. Suburban schools are already overcrowded and there is no room to bring in outsiders.
9. The presence of disabled learners will result in the reduction of the quality of education in the suburbs.
10. Suburban families have to work their

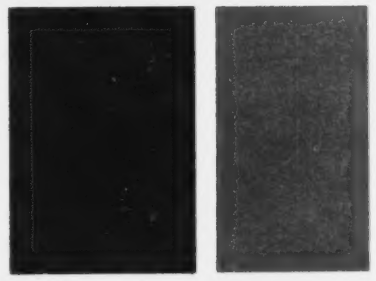
way up and then move out; if inner-city families desire the opportunities of the suburbs, let them come by way of the same route.

The results of "Project Concern," as reported by the American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, show considerable success. Placement in a suburban school — either with or without supportive assistance — is associated with significantly greater growth in IQ than placement in an urban school at grades *kindergarten*, *two*, or *three*.

At only one grade level, grade four, did subjects in an urban school have a growth rate in IQ that was significantly higher than the experimental groups. Thus the experimental intervention seems most effective up through grade three in terms of measurable changes in intellectual functioning.

There is no clear trend for drops in performance level occurring after the summer vacation. And the changes in IQ, though moderate in magnitude, reflect considerable growth toward the national norm for the experimental groups in grades K - 3.

There appear to be no negative psychological or social consequences for the project children involved in the suburban placement. Most expressed a liking for the program and a desire to continue. Dropouts are relatively few (about 10 percent) and their attitudes and those of their parents remain basically positive.



PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Conference delegates agreed that the relationship between education and parents should begin before the child goes to school. In general, however, attention is too often focused on three-year-olds and upwards, whereas programs for the very young disadvantaged should also be encouraged.

A year of education lost at the preschool level could have a cumulative effect. This suggests that, to obtain the best end results, the child should be enrolled in the educational system at birth. But to offer a continuous program from birth through every stage of education raises questions about the availability and best use of resources.

Some thought it preferable to devote a large proportion to preschool work, justified by the long-term effect of improving the educational climate at home.

Attention was focused on the "Infant Education Research Project" in Washington, D. C., where tutors provide intellectual and verbal stimulation to children from the ages of 15 months to 36 months. Instruction is on a one tutor/one child basis, one hour per day, five days per week, in the child's home.

The instructional program is based upon the rationale that studies of intellectual development have found no differences in mean mental test scores of infants — from different social classes and from different races — up to 15 or 18 months; but by the age of three years large differences between groups have emerged. These studies suggest the hypothesis that culturally deprived children develop progressively greater deficits in intellectual functioning during the period from 15 months to three years — the period of early verbal development — because of lack of adequate intellectual, particularly verbal, stimulation.

During the program of home visitation, the tutor talks with the child, shows him pictures, teaches new words, plays games, reads from books, assists in coloring of pictures and construction of simple jigsaw puzzles, etc. Participation of the mother or of other family members in the education of the infant is encouraged but not required. Frequently, the mother spontaneously joins the activity and asks the tutor's advice as to how she can continue the activity with the child and his siblings. Books and materials are left in the home by the tutor for this purpose.

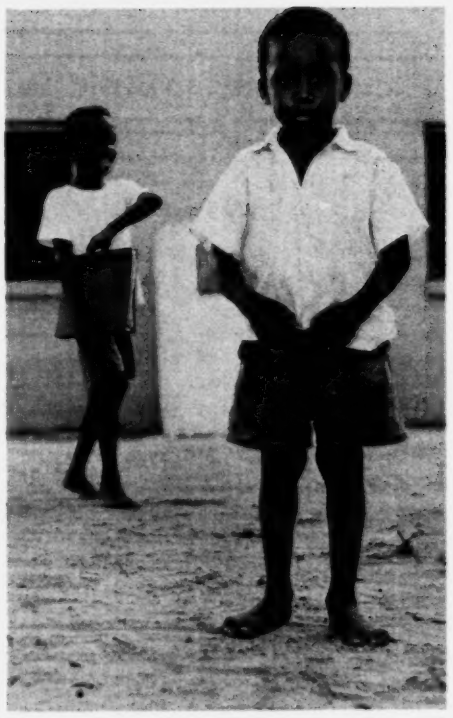
The average tutoring time per child is 340 hours, or approximately 16 hours per month for the 21 months of the program. Each child is served continuously through the course of the project, even though some families will move several times during this period. Each mother is paid $1 per tutoring

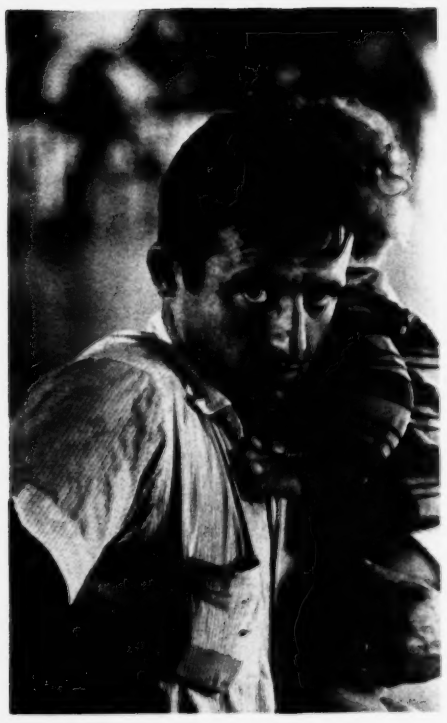
session and $10 each time she brings her child to one of several test administrations.

Consensus of the evaluating staff is that the tutors have become an important and desired element in the families of the tutored children. As the project proceeds, tutors become increasingly accepted in the home and neighborhood for they are not perceived as inspectors or welfare agents. As rapport is gained with the family, especially the mother, the tutor begins to take on the role of a confidant and helper in diverse areas such as budgeting family finances and the use of community resources. *In a number of cases, this project resulted in the family's first visit to the zoo or the library.*

Problems experienced by the tutors include not finding the child ready to participate at the time of the visit and the lack of a quiet place in which to hold the tutoring session. Tutor ratings of parental behavior are correlated with achievement at 36 months. Child neglect is significantly related to performance in the expected direction, *i.e.*, the more neglected children perform poorly.

The conference delegates at Ditchley Park decided that the clear objective in preschool education should be the planned, structured, and yet flexible extension of children's language development and of their experiences. The responsibility of making this available to all children from the ages of three to five belonged, in the view of the majority, to the educational authorities. A minority,





however. felt that these facilities should be developed by private agencies outside the public system, for the latter would benefit from competition and from the introduction of fresh practices from other sources. Then it would be for parents to decide whether or not to use preschool facilities — but many would need instruction if they were to *learn to want them.*

It was suggested that a "multiple auspices" program might be encouraged, linking education with medical care, in which one element would be the provision of full-time "day care" for children of working mothers. This, however, gave rise to the objection

that the parents' role might be usurped rather than reinforced.

One delegate made note of an experimental project carried out in Letcher County, Kentucky, where a survey revealed that almost one-fourth of the students in the county were significantly educationally retarded and deprived. "We assigned priorities," he explained. "Our pretests showed that our children were weakest in reading. But after the program started, we found that other problems — emotional, physical, and medical — have a bearing on reading. We altered our program to include medical services, and then learned that nutrition plays an important role in health, so we added food services. Then, of course, not having a library and enough books to read is part of it, so equipping and staffing libraries became very important to us. Now we're for a total program."

As with older age groups of less-privileged children, the verdict of the conference was against introducing special preschool programs which might tend to stigmatize the deprived. *A single pattern for all* would also make it less likely that middle-class children would grow up without the advantage of mixing with a different group at an early age.

Whereas in the United States efforts are being made to teach mothers to play with their children and to introduce books and toys into poor homes, emphasis in Britain lays on the development of play groups. Middle-class mothers have organized them all over England, followed by voluntary organizations in some areas of need. In cities, some are also being set up with a 55 percent governmental contribution toward the cost, but, by and large, the less privileged are left to rely on the hope that the state will one day provide nursery education for all.

One member reminded the conference of the importance of the *father's role* in child rearing. The absence of a father, either literally or in terms of interest as a parent, heightened the problems of less-privileged children.

It is a valuable aspect of play groups that they involve fathers as well as mothers; for instance, rosters of supervision and the making and maintenance of equipment mean that both parents share the experience with the child. In depressed areas, this activity could provide an opportunity to teach parents about their children's preschool needs.

Another method of improving preschool education would be, it was suggested, to enlarge the role of mass media, particularly television. TV could bring systematic education into the home, as much for parents as for children. With its universal message, unaffected by implications of class and status, it is unique in the way it could reach the disadvantaged without discrimination. It should be part of the established provision and be exploited nationally in the interests of children of preschool age.

In this area, the critically acclaimed United States television series "Sesame Street" received plaudits from most of the conference delegates. It has been reported that preschool children in the United States clock more than 4,000 hours in front of a television set before they start their formal education. "Sesame Street" claims to reach six to seven million of these youngsters for one hour a day, five days a week. But the programs are broadcast on America's "educational television" channels and receive no network coverage whatsoever.

Network television executives in the United States claim that they cannot afford anything like "Sesame Street," which was funded by some $8 million in grants. However, much of "Sesame Street's" funding went into research and other nonprogramming expenses. It was recently reported that actual production costs during the first season ran about $27,000 *per hour;* on the other hand, a *half-hour* cartoon usually costs a network around $55,000. So it would seem that network television executives in America, in the past, just weren't willing to experiment in the field of educational programming for children, let alone see that such programs reach the deprived child as well as the child of the affluent home.

A preschool program, similar to "Sesame Street" in concept but on a much smaller scale, is under development by the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, whose developers also believe in entertaining children and teaching them reading skills at the same time. Through television, the nonessentials of reading such as learning to hold a book properly, turning pages, and left-to-right progression are stripped away. Words become as active on the screen as the cartoon characters who utter them, thus increasing the child's attention span.

Words and letters come alive since the sounds and blends can be skillfully coordinated mechanically. Individual letters appear on the screen and then dance together to blend into a word. Words are then woven into cartoons that can compete with any commercial production.

Finally, in the area of preschool education, mention was made of the U.S.S.R.'s "The Program of Instruction in the Kindergarten" (*i.e.*, preschool education), approved by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Republic, and recently published in translation by the Educational Testing Service as *Soviet Preschool Education Program of Instruction* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, 1969).

In Russia, there has been an extensive program of preschool education for more than three decades, developing millions of young children from the ages of two months to seven years. The report gives an hour-by-hour account of what goes on in a Soviet *crèche*-kindergarten.

Features of Russian education that were of particular interest to American and British conferees included: playpens that are placed on an adult eye level with up to six children in them; the early inculcation of a "collective consciousness," *i.e.*, teaching children that "the doll is not *mine* but *ours*"; the striking preponderance of group play (a child playing alone is frowned upon); evidence of an amazing degree of self-reliance (three-year-olds eat lunch without an adult at the table, and eighteen-month-old children dress themselves); and a stress on continued exposure to the out-of-doors the year-round.

Instructions to Soviet teachers are incredibly detailed; for example, in the "fourth year of the child's life":

> During the summer the children are sponged daily. The sponging begins with the water temperature at 33°C.; every three or four days, the temperature is lowered by 1 degree until it reaches 23°C. After the sponging, the children are rapidly and thoroughly dried. On cool days the sponging should take place in a sheltered spot with the water temperature at 19 - 20°C.

In addition to giving a fascinating overview of the process of preschool education in the U.S.S.R., the Program of Instruction poses a crucial question to Americans and British alike — a question which was frequently raised in the small group discussions: Are we doing as much for our children as the Russians are doing for theirs?

CURRICULUM AND METHOD

For all its significance, the content of curriculum in the schools of England and the United States was regarded by conference delegates as taking second place to the climate in which it is offered. This depended on the qualities shown by lead teachers and senior staff.

Whatever methods used, "teacher expectation" was agreed to be all important. In other words, if the teacher has a good opinion of the child's possibilities, the child is likely to live up to it and, conversely, a poor opinion on the teacher's part would lead to poor results. This implies that "streaming" (the British system of grouping for learning) has a negative influence on the child.

Turning to what is actually taught in school, the conferees stressed the need to foster intellectual performance along with personal development. In this respect, there was some argument about the method of obtaining the best results. It was thought essential to provide children with a motive to learn. An example quoted was the use of the ticker-tape machine; if children are given news reports to read, it could promote their keenness for reading. Furthermore, initiatives associated with a child's environment can make him generally more enthusiastic. This, however, brought the criticism that to restrict activities to a child's experience and environment would be to keep him in blinkers; instead, the limitations of a poor home should be compensated for in school.

In order to avoid the danger of placing all the emphasis on personal development, the intellectual aims which disadvantaged children could be expected to fulfill need defining. These are, basically, competence in the use of language and in (as the British say) numeracy. Children should be taught a proper knowledge of language for oral communication, for reading, and for writing. Language should be treated in the classroom not simply as a means of self-expression but as a tool of learning. These are fields in which all teachers, but especially those in primary education, need better training.

Attention was drawn to language disadvantage as a critical aspect of social disability. It limits educational development, for a child restricted in his use of language finds it hard to handle school materials. However, differences of this kind are thought to be due more to varying environments than to contrasts of basic ability. In a Speech and Language Development Program undertaken in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, culturally disadvantaged students in seven elementary schools who exhibited a lack of oral language ability received intensive assistance from trained speech therapists. The therapists taught the children in groups of six to eight, three hours a week, during a 15-week period.

The students were drawn from grades one and two, and were in 17 classes in schools situated in poverty districts of Milwaukee designated as a "target area" by the Social Development Commission of that city. The neighborhood, about 70 percent Negro and 15 percent Spanish-American, is characterized by high population mobility and density. The families in it are large, often with either no father or a nonworking father. The adults in the families are often uncommunicative or else are seldom present. The children usually are not taken outside the neighborhood.

The stated objectives of the program were: (1) to create in disadvantaged children, who are presenting a verbal language delay, skills in verbal usage which would enable them to function in competition with middle-class children of like ages; and (2) to compile a "curriculum" guide of effective techniques developed and employed by the project therapists for use by itinerant therapists and regular classroom teachers.

The specific language deficiencies of disadvantaged children in this school setting were listed as:

- limited vocabulary
- immature sentence structure
- poor comprehension
- difficulties in classification
- inability to see relationships
- inability to sequence
- high degree of distractibility
- poor retention
- poor listening habits
- weak in abstract thinking
- little imagination

The Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities influenced the thinking of the therapists and assisted them in developing a curriculum. The nine language abilities isolated and evaluated by this test were reduced for project purposes into the following four categories:

Decoding

Understanding both auditory and visual stimuli.

Association

Thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, and seeing relationships.

Memory

Retaining, reproducing, and recalling what has been heard or seen.

Encoding

Expressing oneself through motor and verbal modalities.

Both the regular classroom teachers and the project therapists rated students in the experimental groups before and after treatment using seven characteristics related to participation and language. The classroom teachers did not think that the first experimental group had improved significantly in their *classroom* participation and language behavior, but the therapists' ratings on all seven characteristics showed a significant improvement in their *therapy group* participation and language behavior.

In the second experimental group, the teachers agreed with the therapists that there was significant improvement in four of the seven characteristics, but still did not agree on the remaining three. The evaluators speculated that these results were caused by the teachers becoming more sensitive in observing changes. On *individual* ratings of students, the teachers and therapists showed a good degree of agreement.

At the conclusion of this report, the conference members raised the question of whether or not inadequate underlying thought processes could be safely deduced from restricted use of language. But studies were quoted which showed a low correlation between expressive language skills and powers of comprehension among the disadvantaged.

Both British and Americans agreed about what, in their countries, might be called "good" primary school practice and found the same meaning in terms such as "progressive," "modern," and "child-centered." But with some children, the approach might need to be modified in offering them educational experiences categorized as "good." Where, for instance, they involve freedom of choice, the young or newly arrived immigrant child might not be equipped to exercise or benefit from it when he first goes to school.

At the higher secondary level, more flexibility is needed. This, it was felt, makes it important to expand the ranges of choice available in terms both of curricula and of free entry and return to the formal academic system. Too many people view departure from it as the end of education and, within the system itself, there is evidence of hostility toward courses run by industry and by other institutions technically outside it. Mention of various programs of this sort raises the issue of whether or not they can retain parity of prestige if they are related to future occupational status or to socioeconomic or ethnic groups. But, as one member pleaded, more enthusiasm is needed for new ideas and methods.

Too often teachers are conservative; they wait for a method of education to be proved 100 percent effective before adopting it themselves. Yet the stranglehold of existing patterns, modes, and regulations needs to be broken. Instead, there should be freedom to experiment and to teach by instinct and compassion rather than by book and rule.

THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

Discussion of the aims and methods of educating the less privileged led to the crucial question of how a sufficient number of suitable teachers are to be found and given the right training. Schools in large cities, or wherever there is a significant proportion of poor children, are beset with a multiplicity of problems. Financial support is too often inadequate and not enough teachers are available who are prepared to take jobs in a city system.

For work in depressed areas, teachers need the highest degree of competence. The usually acceptable qualifications, in many cases, may be insufficient and additional training is required. The same applies to school administrators, supervisors, and other specialized personnel, both professional and nonprofessional. They all, in one way or another, have a very real influence on students whether directly in giving instruction, or indirectly by their attitudes toward children, or by the services they perform.

If not enough special teachers are emerging, one reason is to be found in the operation of the normal assignment system. There seems to be a general pattern whereby the best teachers have greater bargaining power over where they are to be placed, with the result that disadvantaged students are often left in the hands of the less able. Employment authorities and teachers have a joint concern in achieving the best distribution and this might well mean drafting teachers to schools to which they might not be attracted initially.

To quote from a recent British report on educating the disadvantaged, "the great need in schools is for intuitive, imaginative, and resourceful teachers who can make sense of the complex situation of each individual student and help him go forward, despite the difficulties and stresses involved." But the regular college and university teacher-training programs have not been meeting this need. A number of the reasons include:

1. Training programs are not broad in scope; they should cater to suburban and rural schools as well as to the inner city.
2. Local colleges and universities often supply only a minority of the new teachers coming every year to city schools, and cannot draft preparatory programs for the needs of particular districts, as most school systems draw on wider regional or national resources.
3. Most preparatory programs feed local needs only in a piecemeal manner, and

many, though good in themselves, attack only single elements of a much larger problem without systematic coordination.

4. The endorsement of a program by a prominent college does not guarantee either its utility or its effective dissemination to future teachers. Although many British and American colleges and universities in recent years have introduced courses in compensatory education and other specializations, they do not appear to have made any significant impact. A satisfactory knowledge of training requirements cannot be assumed, as not enough has been proved about the training in any one institution.
5. The indirect and diffuse channels by which teacher-training colleges receive information on their results is perhaps a major cause of their limited effectiveness. Their graduates are scattered over a wide area and comments about their performance are, when available, often vague. Even when more precise, it is hard to assess from them which aspects of preparation have succeeded or failed.
6. There is no public accountability for training programs, although they are supported by public funds. Local school districts fall under public scrutiny and, unlike colleges and universities, they also have to live with their failures.

METHODS OF TRAINING

Greater importance should be attached to the initial preparation of teachers, for many leave the profession in their first year because they have been inadequately trained. To help teachers in the instruction of less-privileged children, extra training is required whereby they can acquire the special skills which alone can give them satisfaction in their work. In order to keep in touch with the needs of their students, it was agreed that all training-college staff ought to continue to teach or to return to class teaching regularly.

The personal and social education of the intending teacher was held to be as necessary as his professional preparation. One of his tasks as a teacher would be to encourage mutual consultation with parents and members of the local community. He must therefore learn to study and respond to variations in home and family conditions, social context, aspirations, values, and attitudes toward school. Young teachers should not be afraid of involving themselves with parents, and preteaching contact with them would allow relationships to be established at an early stage. For work with deprived children, the

teacher needs to be trained to sympathize with their culture and to believe that they are fit and able to be educated. Otherwise, the teacher might come to regard them as a socially and intellectually homogeneous group and fail to develop their individual potentials.

It was generally agreed that all must be trained to teach properly the basic skills and, above all, fluency in reading and the comprehension and development of language. Special projects should be encouraged also, as each area of teaching has its special needs and the method of handling them needs to be developed in its own way. One British speaker pleaded for more training in classroom discipline. The problem, he felt, has been shelved by pretending that it does not exist.

While optional courses might be provided in compensatory education, it was thought to be wrong to focus on academic sociology at the expense of direct contact with the local schools and community. It was at the point of placement that the most relevant preparation for teaching disadvantaged children could be given. As part of the inductive provision for all teachers and as a necessary condition when they are first placed, the school system should organize intensive and strictly practical training programs to enable them to become quickly and fully effective.

Ideally, in all training, the environment should be experimental, challenging, and free. Students should learn to do their own planning, although with advice and support.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

The in-service training of teachers was agreed to be vitally important. All educational personnel need continuous development and training, especially those working with the less privileged. Retraining is all the more necessary to bring them up-to-date.

The example was set years ago by large industrial corporations which found it expedient to set up special divisions charged with providing appropriate training for staff at all levels — from plant maintenance to management. The success of such systems was implied by their widespread adoption, for instance, by the military and other sectors of government. The large numbers of people employed by educational authorities, unlike those in private industry, receive their training in institutions over which the authorities have no control. The authorities should be provided with sufficient funds to contract with colleges, universities, other agencies, and their own able teachers to provide for their in-service training needs. Educational priorities should be determined and the responsibility for constructing any training program shared between teachers and school administrators. The former are often more active than the latter in seeking solutions. They need to be able to discuss their programs with each other and are likely to profit little from in-service training unless they have a part in planning it. In Britain, the Schools Council, which is a teacher-dominated body, attempts to deal with their problems in this respect.

One significant development in Britain has been the growth of teachers' centers, provided by local educational authorities, which are assuming greater responsibility for in-service training. Although not the final word, these centers constitute a development which American educators would do well to examine closely.

On the other hand, a special project in California has been very successful. It has been found that a single individual on going back to his school soon gives up his efforts to use the new knowledge he has gained from in-service training. Therefore, the idea of training in groups was considered. A demonstration school was set up and a group of four to six staff from each related school was sent to it for training. When they returned, they were able to support each other and to keep up a reinforcing relationship with the demonstration school. The only drawback was expense, for the staff had to be replaced while attending the course.

The proper organization and conduct of in-service programs, it was concluded, demand resources and administrative procedures on a planned and permanent footing. The conventional *ad hoc* and diffuse provision of programs is totally inadequate. They must not be too short, for, if they are, they tend only to highlight the issues with a superficial flamboyance which masks the real difficulties underneath, creating or reinforcing negative attitudes among attending teachers.

RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS

The traditional sources of teacher supply are:

1. Universities with graduate and undergraduate programs (Britain and the United States)
2. Colleges of Education
   A. Three-year course for certification which can be extended to a fourth year for a degree (Britain)
   B. Four-year degree and certification program (U.S.)
3. Liberal Arts Colleges with additional training (U.S.)

Additional sources exist in both countries:

1. Teacher Corps (U.S.)
2. Programs for teacher interns (U.S.)
3. Special courses for overseas graduates (Britain)
4. Urban Education Corps for liberal arts graduates and persons from other careers (U.S.)
5. Colleges mainly taking mature students (Britain)

In relating the sources to the needs of schools, problems may arise from the interplay of supply and demand and also from inappropriate certification requirements. The latter particularly affects schools for the less privileged, and in Britain it is planned to set up a council to look into the relevant qualifications and their assessment.

Several speakers appealed for the recruitment of nonprofessionals with special skills and experience as a valuable addition to the teacher corps. But in the United States, a move in this direction has raised considerable issues about the acceptance of persons considered to be unqualified. One American warned of failures resulting from disregard of professional credentials as a prerequisite to teaching; nevertheless, he admitted the need for changes in the American credential system. In Britain, unqualified teachers are expelled from their posts even after teaching successfully for 20 years. The problem needs further study with the aim of ensuring that talent is used wherever it can be found, but without any lowering of standards. One approach to a solution might be through setting up certification appeals committees, and another through organizing special courses for suitable nonprofessionals. In Britain, short courses of this kind, leading to certification, already exist for people with technical training.

Apart from teaching, there is plenty of room for other nonprofessional help in education. The teacher may fear to give up his single-handed role in the classroom. But a doctor is happy to be the leader of a group and to allow nurses and domestic staff to contribute toward healing his patients. Similarly, a teacher could lead a group that includes the parents and nonprofessional teachers' aides, all helping to educate the child.

MORALE AND INCENTIVES

The high rate of turnover among teachers of the less privileged indicates poor morale. The adverse conditions prevailing in many schools will affect the performance of most teachers. Teachers in these schools seem to be mainly of two types: those who are keen and often successful, and those not good enough to be able to find a job elsewhere. The situation is made worse by the generally patronizing attitude toward teachers on the part of the community, the reasons for which need to be examined.

The only way to raise morale is to make teachers more satisfied with their jobs. Adequate preparation, together with continuing in-service training, could be a help, but other incentives are needed as well. These include extra pay, which should appear not as a bribe to induce teachers to work in schools in poor neighborhoods, but rather as a recognition of their special training, experience, and responsibilities. A further incentive could derive from the community if it would change its attitude and recognize the importance of the teacher's role.

Another aspect of morale affects trainees doing practical work. They often benefit from going to a school *in pairs*, which enables them to support each other and cope with indifferent or hostile attitudes of the school staff.

CONCLUSION

The conference members agreed on the need for consistent and long-range planning in education for the less privileged. They accented the importance of teaching basic knowledge, while advocating the development of a close relationship among school, parents, and community. They stressed the importance of special, practical, and continuous training for teachers of the disadvantaged. They favored the establishment of a continued exchange of information and ideas between Britain and the United States. Each country has particular problems of its own, but the basic aims are the same. Each country can benefit from a comparison of methods since solutions are hard to find and all experiments take time to be proved.

The Chairman closed the conference with a quotation by the Reverend Edward Thring, a famous British headmaster:

> The appeal to success, prizes, and prize-winning bids fair to be the watchword of the day. But what does this do for the majority, for the noncompeting crowd who nevertheless do not politely die off and make room and cannot, through modern squeamishness, be killed off and buried?
>
> The weak are pushed into a corner and neglected, their natural tendency to shrink from labor is educated into despair by their being constantly reminded, directly or indirectly, that their labor is no good.
>
> The pride of intellect is to be unchained and with the break up of humility, reverence, holiness, and genius, the child of love, the Darker Age will be set off to be wondered at in turn in years to come. There is to be no room for the weak. Yet it is an axiom that a system which takes no count of the weak is no part of God's true world. Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost.

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